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MEMORIAL QUILT SALUTING UNITS DEPLOYED WITH V CORPS' 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION TO BE AUCTIONED FOR CHARITY

1st Infantry Division Public Affairs Office release

TIKRIT, Iraq – It's not every day that a person can put his hobby skills to good use to help others in a worthy cause, but one V Corps Soldier has found a way.

Sgt. Nicole S. Smith, assigned to the Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the corps' 121st Signal Battalion, is using her sewing skills to make a quilt that will be auctioned to raise money for the 1st Infantry Division Foundation. The proceeds will be used to fund scholarships for children of Soldiers killed in the line of duty. Currently there are 48 children who qualify for the financial assistance.

The foundation is a charitable organization established by the Society of the First



COURTESY 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION
Sgt. Nicole S. Smith of V Corps' Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 121st Signal Battalion, 1st Infantry Division, and Spc. Andrew W. Meyer, a medic with the 1st Military Police Company, hold up a division memorial quilt she made in Iraq. With some family, Soldier and Iraqi help, Smith spent about three months making the patchwork of more than 100 squares representing the units deployed with the division. The unique work will go up for auction November 1 to raise money for scholarships for the children of division Soldiers who have died in the line of duty.

Infantry Division in 1966 during the Vietnam War. The foundation allowed for funds to be collected by Soldiers of the "Big Red One" division in Vietnam and its veterans at home, to establish scholarships for children of division Soldiers killed during that war.

"I had planned on making a quilt since before I came to Iraq," Smith said. "I wanted this to be a piece of history and something different; something a Soldier made."

The quilt is made up of more than 100 squares embroidered with the units who have served with the division in the second iteration of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Smith says, adding that many of its blocks are signed by division general officers and other senior leaders. The back side is a sheet that has been signed by a number of deployed Soldiers. The work is 100 percent cotton and queen-sized, measuring 7 x 7 feet.

The process of making the quilt started in April and took about three months, the sergeant explained. While she did almost every part of the quilt herself, such as the cutting, sizing, ironing and piecing together, Smith did receive a helping hand when she needed it. Her mother mailed her the fabric, Soldiers donated patches to be added, and several Iraqis embroidered the names of units on the quilt.

"I didn't expect to get so much support from other Soldiers," Smith said. "They really helped out a lot."

Smith says she is happy to devote her free time to a worthy cause.

"I hope it brings enough money to make a sizeable donation," she said.

On November 1, the 1st Infantry Division Memorial Quilt will be offered for auction on e-bay.

More information is available by visiting the e-bay web site and searching the number 2278625815 in the search block.

